

VIDYA SINHA



“The journey of acting never ends.”

HOME COMING!

Vidya Sinha, the actress with the goodie-goodie-gumdrops image makes a comeback after two decades. Vidya Sinha who starred in

memorable films like *Rajnigandha*, *Choti Si Baat*, *Karm*, *Mukti...* is back under Bollywood's arclights. She had captured the hearts of cinegoers with her *seddhi saadhi* image and her enchanting

smile. Television was a mid-way terminal. It's films that are her final destination. We met Ms Sinha on the sets of her comeback film *Great Target* and spoke about times old and new.

What does it feel like, facing a movie camera after two decades?

It feels like I've come back home. I play a mother's role in *Great Target* because it goes with my age. In *Great Target* the actor playing



– Mera Jeewan

my son is a newcomer.

A newcomer!? But you acted with the topmost stars of your day...

Yes, as a heroine I acted opposite most of the top actors of the day. The maximum number of films have been opposite Sanjeev Kumar. My last film as a heroine was **Kirayadar**. After this I settled down with my family in Pune. I lost my husband five years ago and my daughter is presently schooling in Panchgani. So I began to feel lonely. I did two tele-serials, **Bahurani** and **Darar**, but did not

derive any professional satisfaction from them. I wanted films and finally **Great Target** happened.

What changes do you notice in the industry?

The most important thing I noticed is that the canvas of a film has become vast. But I also observed that it has lost its soul. Even the star craze like in the earlier days is missing.

But we have the Hrithik Roshan craze...

God alone knows how long the craze for Hrithik will last but I've yet to come across the

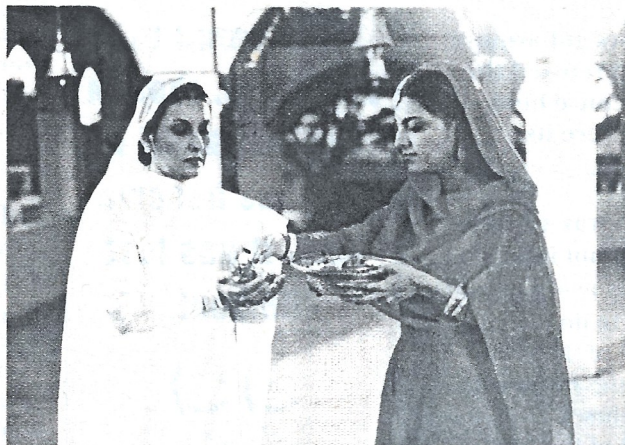
frenzy that Rajesh Khanna created. We had gone to Dehradun for the shooting of **Karma** with Rajesh Khanna as leading man. Every Gurkha and donkeywallah there would imitate his hair-style, wear a Nepali cap like he did and even similar clothes. Andaz had become a super hit

pack-up I'd notice his fans shivering in the cold, outside our hotel. When I would open my window in the morning I would see more fans waiting with autograph books in hand, for the superstar. It was an amazing infatuation... never seen before.

Raj Kapoor had



– With Ashima Bhalla, Pramod Anand and Charlie in **Great Target**

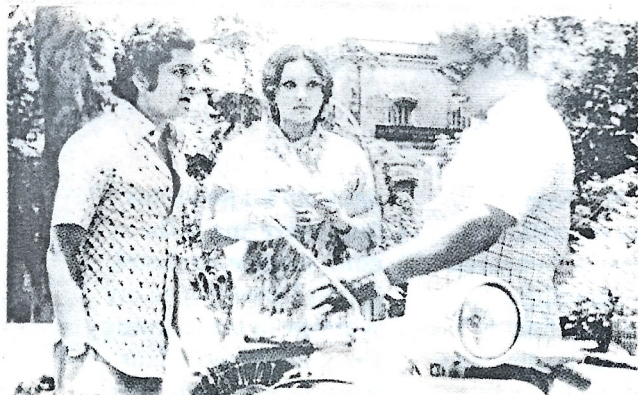


– Uttaradhihari

film so everyone would wear goggles like he did in it. I was zapped, seeing so many Rajesh Khanna's strutting about in Dehradun. The hairdressers had hiked up their price for the special Rajesh Khanna haircut. One would see his posters all over the place. After

selected you for Satyam Shivam Sundaram. How come Zeenat ended up doing the film?

When I heard that Raj Kapoor was considering me for the role, I showed him some reels of my under-production films. He was



– Basuda directs Vidya and Asrani in *Choti Si Baat*



– A prayerful moment in *Sone Dil Lohe Ke Haath*

impressed and I was sure he'd sign me. I later learnt that that Zeenat had been signed.

But news got around you had refused the film because bold scenes were its mainstay.

Yes, this was a much-talked about issue then. In reality every heroine wanted to do the role and one of them had spread the rumour that I had refused to do it on account of the bold scenes. But it was not so.

Why did you go in for only small-budget films?

Because I began my career with small-budget films like

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Compared to yesterday, though the canvas of a film has become vast, it has lost its soul.

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Rajnigandha and *Choti Si Baat* which became box-office hits.

Did you stay away from the press because of your simple image or because they began prying into your

personal life?

The press had given me their total support during *Rajnigandha*. Even then I would hardly speak, and when they started to talk about my personal life I withdrew further.

How do you feel facing the camera after so many years?

The journey of acting never ends. It's a continuous process. I did feel nervous on the first day because everything seemed so new. Especially the absence of microphones, because for teleserials we use cordless mikes that we pin to our clothes.

Which other films do you have on hand?

Discussions are on for another two to three films but all are roles of a mother. Looks like there's a paucity of mothers in films, for even Rati Agnihotri is playing one.

Did you ever try to move away from your simple image to a glamorous one?

Many heroines labelled me a limp and expressionless heroine because I acted only in films with social themes, playing roles families could identify with. At that time there were dozens of glamorous actresses with whom I had to compete with, Raakhee, Rekha, Zeenat and Sharmila being a few.

It wasn't easy creating a slot for myself amongst them. I managed to hold on because of my charming smile and the roles that I did. One of the reasons was that no one would accept such roles, so it was a slot unique to me. Actually, it was because of my image that Basuda selected me for *Rajnigandha*, advising me to retain my simple image.

What steps did you take to retain it?

I tried to move away from glamorous roles, like in the film *Chalu Mera Naam*. On the first day of shooting for this film I found it difficult enacting a *chalu* role. It was diametrically opposite to the roles I usually did. I felt this *chalu* role did not suit me. When I returned home that evening I was upset with myself and remained agitated for four to five days. Then a change came over me because I had begun to enjoy myself with these roles. I began accepting light comedies but sadly had to give them up because they did not work.

And today...?

I've done a little more than twenty films. If I do better in my second innings I'll gain a lot of satisfaction and happiness. A lot more than my first innings.

— NARENDRA UPADHAYAY **g**